

Healthy Palmetto has chosen to increase senior enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as one of six priority areas on which to focus our statewide efforts. As the state coalition that collectively addresses healthy eating and active living, Healthy Palmetto is working to unify and mobilize efforts to create equitable opportunities for all South Carolinians to achieve better health.

## OUR PRIORITY

We support the SC Department on Aging and SC Thrive to increase enrollment of eligible older adults in SNAP through community-based outreach.

## WHY SNAP?

Many older South Carolinians who are eligible for SNAP don't take advantage of the nutrition assistance program. Increased enrollment in SNAP would mean fewer seniors would live with poverty and food insecurity. Food insecurity increases the risk of poor health, complicates people's ability to manage illness, and is linked to higher health care costs.

### SC DEPT. ON AGING & SC THRIVE

The SC Department on Aging has 10 Area Agencies on Aging throughout South Carolina who assist seniors with SNAP applications either directly or by referring them to their local Department of Social Services or SC Thrive. SC Thrive provides counselors and technology enabling seniors to apply for SNAP through "Thrive Hub."

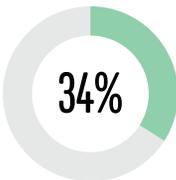
The two agencies collaborate to significantly increase the participation of older adults (age 60+) in SNAP through community-based outreach and enrollment initiatives; and to identify, analyze, and disseminate replicable, cost-effective, and scalable strategies for increasing enrollment. In 2021, SC Thrive served 8,346 seniors, either in person or through their Contact Center. The two agencies focus on low-income, high-need populations by collaborating on home-delivery meal services, and outreach at senior farmers markets, food banks, wellness centers, and health clinics.



In 2019, **nearly 8%** of older South Carolinians were living below the poverty line, *and...*



South Carolina ranks among the top 10 states for senior food insecurity.<sup>1</sup> *Yet, only...*



**of eligible seniors in the state receive SNAP benefits.<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Agriculture    <sup>2</sup>Feeding America



# HOW CAN YOU HELP?



## **PROVIDE NEIGHBORLY SUPPORT.**

The most common cause of food insecurity is low income. If a neighbor or family member is struggling, offer to help them apply for SNAP benefits, pick-up groceries, bring them a prepared meal, or connect them to your local Area Agency on Aging for an assessment of needs.



## **MAKE A DONATION.**

Donating non-perishable food items to your local food bank is a great way to assist people struggling with food insecurity. Many families rely on food pantries to help them stretch their budgets. When choosing food items to donate, focus on proteins and whole grains to help families make healthy choices.



## **KNOW THE DATA.**

Recognize the role race/ethnicity and socioeconomics play in food insecurity. Did you know rates tend to be higher among older adults who have low income and are disabled, Black, Hispanic, living alone, and rent their home? Food insecurity rates are also higher among “young seniors” ages 60 to 69.



## **TALK ABOUT IT.**

If you know someone who may be vulnerable to food insecurity, the first step is to talk about it openly and with sensitivity. Lack of affordable, nutritious food shouldn't be a shameful topic. After all, food insecurity isn't anyone's fault; it affects many people.



## **ASK FOR HELP.**

Don't be ashamed of not having enough food; it's okay to ask for help. If you're a senior and need assistance, contact SC Thrive at (800) 726-8774 or SC Department of Aging at (800) 868-9095.



## **What is SNAP?**

*The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides benefits to eligible low-income individuals and families via an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. Each month, SNAP funds are directly deposited into their EBT card accounts. The card can be used like a debit card to purchase eligible food in authorized retail food stores, such as supermarkets, convenience stores, and certain farmers' markets. The cards cannot be used to purchase nonfood items.*

## **CONTACT US**

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[WWW.AGING.SC.GOV/NUTRITION/RESOURCES](http://WWW.AGING.SC.GOV/NUTRITION/RESOURCES)



South Carolina  
**DEPARTMENT  
ON AGING**

sc **Thrive**